

METHAMPHETAMINE

Methamphetamine or “meth” has become an increasing problem in Iowa over the last 10 years. Meth is a central nervous system stimulant that can be smoked, snorted, injected, or administered orally. Meth manufacturers use common ingredients, such as over-the-counter cold medicine (pseudoephedrine), ephedrine, red phosphorous, hydrochloric acid, iodine, ether, alcohol, lye, and anhydrous ammonia to create methamphetamine. Pseudoephedrine is a key ingredient in the manufacturing of methamphetamine. The waste products created from the process are a toxic health hazard to people and the environment.

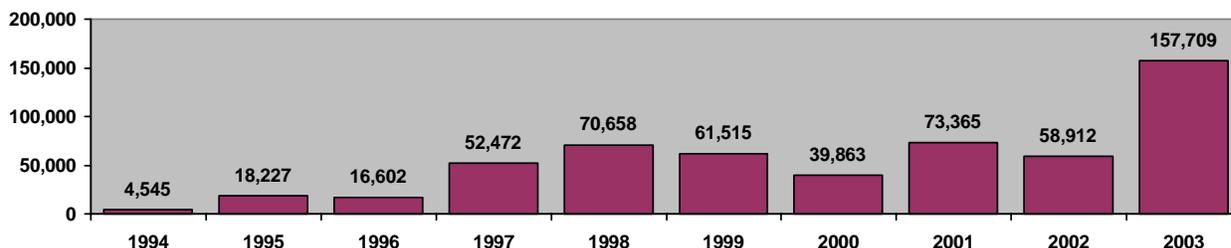


A typical meth lab generates between two and three grams of methamphetamine at one time. According to the Division of Narcotics Enforcement, the street value of one pound of meth ranges from \$5,000 to \$7,000, with a gram costing approximately \$100. The average purity of the drug on the street is approximately 24.0%.

Statistics

In Calendar Year (CY) 2003, Iowa law enforcement officers seized 158,000 grams or 352 pounds of meth. Table 1 illustrates the amounts of meth seized between CY 1994 and CY 2003 for each year.

Amounts of Meth Seized in Iowa, CY 1994–2003 (Iowa DPS)



58,912 grams = 131.5 pounds of meth 157,709 grams = 352.02 pounds of meth

A record 1,425 clandestine meth labs have been dismantled by law enforcement agencies in CY 2004 and in CY 2003, Iowa ranked third in the number of meth lab incidents per capita.

2004 Iowa Legislation

House File 2150 (Child Endangerment/Controlled Substances Act) expanded the crime of child endangerment to include situations in which a person permits the presence of a child at a location where methamphetamine or related substances are being illegally manufactured, or where the substances are possessed. Punishment for this offense is a Class D felony. Over a two-year period (FY 2002 and FY 2003), there were 958 child victims of abuse due to parents manufacturing methamphetamine or possessing precursors.

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House File 2259 (Pseudoephedrine, Restricted Access I Act) prohibits retailers from selling and persons from buying more than two packages of pseudoephedrine in one transaction. The Act also regulates the display of pseudoephedrine products by retailers and requires retailers to post a notice of the law that limits the sale and purchase of the products.



Senate File 2101 (Precursor Substances and Other Products: Intent Act) made technical changes in regard to receiving a precursor substance or possessing a product to be used in the unlawful manufacture of a controlled substance. The violations were changed from intent “to use,” to intent that the product or substance “be used.”

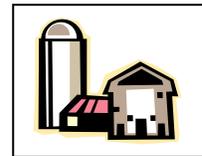
Alternatives

Home Rule

The city of Hazelton implemented a city ordinance that imposes controls on the sale of methamphetamine precursors. Hazelton’s ordinance requires the purchaser to show a photo I.D. and to provide a name and address in a log accessible to local law enforcement officers. The Attorney General’s Office issued an opinion in June 2004, regarding local ordinances placing stronger controls on the sale of products containing pseudoephedrine and other meth precursors. The opinion stated that Hazelton’s requirement represents a legitimate exercise of the city’s home rule power and is not preempted by State law.

Anhydrous Ammonia Tank Locks Pilot Program

Tank locks are another alternative to assist in the reduction of methamphetamine manufacturing. The locks are manufactured in Humboldt, Iowa, and cost approximately \$43. The Tank Lock Pilot Program started in 2003. During the same year, Iowa received a \$200,000 federal grant that allowed 26 counties to place locks on anhydrous ammonia nurse tanks. For 2004, \$300,000 has been earmarked for Iowa, which will allow an additional 28 counties to receive locks. In addition to these federal funds, a grant was provided by the Iowa West Foundation to purchase locks for Pottawattamie, Harrison, and Mills counties.



Anhydrous Ammonia Additive

Iowa State University has developed an additive that can be mixed into anhydrous ammonia that renders the anhydrous ineffective for manufacturing methamphetamine. All tests of the additive by the Iowa Division of Criminal Investigation and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) have been positive. Once testing is complete, officials will begin work on an implementation plan. Approximately 95.0% of Iowa meth labs use anhydrous ammonia.

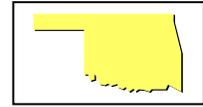
Schedule V Controlled Substance Changes

Sole ingredient pseudoephedrine was addressed by the 2004 General Assembly. The General Assembly may wish to consider restrictions on multiple ingredient pseudoephedrine products in the future. The Governor’s Office of Drug Control Policy conducted a study of the 2003 meth lab statistics and found that 32.7% of the

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pseudoephedrines used to manufacture meth were multiple ingredient pseudoephedrines.

Oklahoma was the first state in the nation to enact a law in 2004 making pseudoephedrine a Schedule V controlled substance. A Schedule V controlled substance is a non-prescription drug that is dispensed or administered to the purchaser by a pharmacist. The purchaser must be at least 18 years of age, present a photo I.D., and their name, address, date, and amount of purchase is maintained by the pharmacist in a bound record book.



The Governor is recommending the Iowa General Assembly enact legislation similar to that of Oklahoma during the 2005 Legislative Session.